

Preschool Theme Kits OUR EARTH



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ADULT RESOURCES

Best of Totline

Jean Warren

ACTIVITY NOTEBOOK

BEYOND THE KITS STORYTIME HANDBOOK FOR YOU: a copy of these activities is available in back of this notebook.

Welcome to Our Earth Theme Kit. Our target age group is 2 to 5 year olds but we have included at least one board book for babies to use. All these books read aloud well, and there are activities, finger plays, and teacher guides to help you. Also, take a look at the general information sheet on the inside cover of this notebook. ENJOY!

Related Activities

-Fun and Games-

THE GREAT BOOKS IN THIS KIT

These are cheerful, beautiful children's books that celebrate many aspects of our earth. Our Big Home: an Earth Poem sums it up: "we share air, water, soil, sky, sun, rain, and being alive". You will enjoy sharing the ideas and pictures with the children in your group. Many books will suggest follow-up activities, as you read. For example, after reading Snail's Spell, let the children scrunch down small and pretend they are snails, as they glide around the room, and outside if weather permits. What do they encounter?

After Hey! Get Off Our Train talk about your own favorite wild animals. Pretend to have your own train, as each child gets on and plays the part of an animal (endangered, or not).

On the Day You Were Born reads wonderfully, while giving small facts about our world. Pages in the back of the book, More about the World Around You, will give more fascinating information, especially for the slightly older children in your group.

After reading The Great Trash Bash, go for a neighborhood walk to pick up litter. Remember to have children wear gloves and be wary of sharp objects. Recycle paper, plastic and metal if possible.

CREATE A WORLD **

Clear a large space that can be used as your world for at least one week. Cover it with paper. Go for a walk to collect rocks, shells, sticks, bark and leaves. Paint a portion of the paper blue. When the paint dries, add the shoreline of rocks and sticks. Place "logs" in the water. With old playdough, form hills and put sticks (with leaves) in for trees. Add pond and forest creatures: turtles, flying insects, fish, birds, deer, etc. Alternative: Create your world as a mural, using small pebbles, sticks, etc., and paints or crayons/colored markers and glue. Draw animals and insects or make them with other materials and glue them on to the mural.



EXPLORATIONS **

Here are some ideas for nature walks, in your yard, or neighborhood.

- Ask "what do you hear?" and "Who do you think is making that sound? Children can take turns being blind-folded if you wish.
- Collect bugs or other small creatures "respectfully", by carefully picking up insects by sliding a piece of paper under them. Return them to their own environment after observing them.
- Use basic magnifying lenses for close-up looks at insects, twigs, leaves, sand, rocks, bark, grass, flowers, fur, feathers, etc. Talk about similarities and differences and how organisms work.

Follow up excursions with letting children create paintings, drawings, collages of natural materials and dictating stories and poems.



MAGIC BUBBLE RIDE **

Have your children pretend to crawl inside a magic bubble that can take them wherever they want to go. Perhaps they'll want to roll and bob about in the ocean, fizz with the other bubbles in a bottle of pop, sit on the back of an elephant, or ride a space vehicle. Encourage the children to talk about and act out situations where the bubbles might take them.

MAKE A VOLCANO *

For excitement, make a volcano. Build up playdough hills around a glass or plastic jar. To make the volcano erupt, fill jar ¾ full with vinegar and red food coloring. Add 2 to 3 tablespoons of baking soda. It should bubble up and over immediately. To prevent messy spills, you may want to put the volcano in a plastic-lined cookie sheet or low box.

*Activity courtesy of the Early Childhood Office of the Seattle Public Library. **Used with permission from King County Library System.

Our Earth Theme Kit

Questions or Suggestions:

Call the Youth Services Dept. at (360) 384-3150

-Fingerplays and Action Rhymes-

CLOUDS

What's fluffy white and floats up high Look toward sky and point upward. Like scoops of ice cream in the sky? And when the wind blows hard and strong.

Sway arms back and forth "blowing". What very gently floats along? What brings the rain? Flutter fingers downward.

What brings the snow that showers Down on us below?
What seems to have just lots of fun Peek-a-booing with the sun?
Play peek-a-boo, hiding behind hands.
When you look in the high, blue sky,
Look toward sky and point upward.
What are those things you see
Floating by?

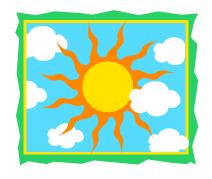
A BOY WENT WALKING **

A little boy went walking One lovely summer day. He saw a little rabbit Who quickly hopped away. He saw a shining river, Go winding in and out. With little fish in it, Swimming all about.

A MOUSE

A mouse lived in a little hole, Lived softly in a little hole. When all was quiet as quiet can be Out popped s/he!

Variation: ask what other small animals live in holes – let them pop out, too!



FLOWERS

Flowers grow like this. Cup hands Trees grow like this. Stand tall, spread arms I grow just like that! Jump up.

"Walk" fingers

Two fingers up for rabbit ears Hop rabbit away. Hands together, make winding movement with hands and arms.

Wiggle hands with palms together.

One hand curled inside the other Sh! Sh! Very softly.
Right hand pops out of left.

Variation: children play part of the mouse, crouch down small, jump up on "out popped s/he!"

THE BEST OF TOTLINE

Each month has activities oriented to the outdoors and wider world. Try some of these, and find many more:

- Go on a Dirt Safari (p. 150)
- Make a Nature Mural by weaving small "found" treasures of nature into a fishing net (p. 170).
- Plan Earth Day Activities from those suggested p. 116-121.
- Make Individual Terrariums using clear plastic cups (p. 119).
- Play the Fishing Game (p. 175).

There are so many great poems, art and science projects, games and activities that you'll want a copy of this resource for your own!

How You Can Help

- Use and return kits promptly so that they are available for others.
- Please check box contents before returning.
- Do not use the book drop. Please return kits inside an open library.